

Letters

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Body

No time for nuclear power

We need to pause and reflect upon our actions, as individuals and as a collective society, to see if they are conducive to our health and well being.

It is obvious that some of our choices and actions are not.

One particular issue that deserves our serious contemplation and genuine understanding is that of nuclear power and the entire industry it fuels, from uranium exploration to end product consumption.

How can we proceed with any part of this industry when we, the people, have not all been informed? We must research and understand the effects of it on the Earth, the people and all living beings. We must know the impact this industry has on life environmentally, physically, mentally and spiritually. Please see the wisdom in this.

As a society, we must consider other ways of producing electricity, and individually, we must consider ways to consume less -- of everything.

There are many alternatives to nuclear power. For the sake of the Earth's children, each one should be carefully considered. Surely Prime Minister Stephen Harper cannot desire to make their future more difficult than it will already be.

A major concern with uranium mining is the amount of greenhouse gases created and the fossil fuels used to produce what is needed to operate a mine.

Is this a valid concern? It is apparent that our actions have thus far left the Earth and its ability to sustain us in critical condition.

I implore Harper to respond to the collective society. I am sure I am not the only one who wishes to hear his comments on this issue and this industry.

What is he going to do to help us stop uranium exploration and mining in New Brunswick? What is he going to do to stop it in Canada? How is he going to help decommission plants? What alternatives will he offer to ease the transition?

No one will convince me of any good coming from nuclear power. I have no interest in money and industry.

They are the wrong kind of idols to worship.

Kelly Newman

Hoyt, N.B.

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Pension questions linger

I have been in correspondence, both personal and through these pages, with the Minister of Veterans Affairs Gregory Thompson.

Recently he wrote to me that his department was addressing concerns about the Veterans Independence Program and work on the Veterans Health Services Review is a top priority.

But I am left with concerns.

Thompson put a package together for the VIP and cost it out before July 2006 as Prime Minister Stephen Harper asked him to do. Now, 15 months later, I question what happened as the issue of the VIP is still pending.

The federal government has a \$14-billion surplus, yet in the Throne Speech there are no benefits for the poverty-stricken including seniors, veterans and veterans' widows.

The HST was reduced by one cent which is only beneficial to the wealthy.

The federal government spoke about helping those in need, promising a better Canada for all, developing real benefits for Canadians today.

Conservative Members of Parliament repeat daily in the House of Commons, "This government is about getting the job done."

The VIP the government promised 20 months ago is one of the many jobs which has not been done. With all due respect, all talk and no action is contrary to what the Conservatives are boasting.

Action needs to be taken on this urgent issue, not eight months from now but immediately as promised by Harper when he was the Leader of the Official Opposition two years and eight months ago.

Joyce Carter

St. Peter's, N.S.

War cheaper than bilingualism

I am writing regarding a letter to the editor in the Oct. 24 Daily Gleaner that said Canada's actions in Afghanistan will cost \$600 million by the end of the year.

How can we afford \$600 million outside our borders?

We cannot afford it. Much the same way we cannot afford the \$750 billion -- and climbing -- spent so far on official bilingualism.

Melvin Smith

Fredericton

They made beautiful music

On Oct. 27, violinist Neli Nikolaeva and violist David Yang, guest artists of the Fredericton Chamber Orchestra, wowed those who braved the bad weather to hear them perform at Christ Church Cathedral.

Frederictonians do not often experience performers of this quality, and the audience was most grateful the performers accepted the orchestra's invitation to visit our city.

Nikolaeva is on full scholarship at the University of Southern California and is already a well-travelled, prize-winning soloist.

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Yang, after a varied career with many accomplishments, is currently artistic director of the Newburyport Chamber Music Festival near Boston and is a sought- after coach, director and performer.

They both performed with the orchestra in Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante in E flat major, one of the peaks of Mozart's creativity. The duet sections were charming and beautiful, each soloist responding to each other as if in a wide- ranging conversation, earning an enthusiastic ovation from the audience.

The highlight of the evening, however, was undoubtedly Nikolaeva's performance of Ravel's Tzigane -- French slang for gypsy -- for solo violin and orchestra. This romantic and astonishing gypsy-style serenade demands every trick in the violinist's repertoire, including harmonics, quadruple stops and switching between rapid plucking with the left hand and bowing with the right, all in rapid succession.

Nikolaeva effortlessly delivered a breathtaking performance. The audience could hardly wait to launch their second standing ovation.

The Fredericton Chamber Orchestra did very well by themselves with Beethoven's Coriolan Overture and Mozart's Symphony No. 39. To my amateur ear, they get better and better every time I hear them. I thought they were especially clear and well balanced that evening.

Conductor David Adams and the orchestra deserve congratulations for a thoroughly enjoyable evening from start to finish, full of the energy to be found only in live performance.

Leo Macneil

Fredericton

Why not have the rich get poorer?

Wilfred Langmaid's Oct. 26 column, entitled "The rich get richer, while the poor get poorer" describes some moving anecdotes but does not have a remedy for the problem.

He says: "I wish I could offer a solution to this dilemma. I cannot."

I wonder why?

Since in a dilemma one is faced with two equally unsatisfactory alternatives, what is wrong with the alternative that the poor get richer and rich get less rich?

Of course, the rich might not like it, but it will solve the problem. However, it will require our world's primitive economic system be transformed into a more just system.

Otherwise, a child born into a poor family is more likely to go to bed hungry than a child born into a millionaire's family.

There is a need to reflect, and be willing to accept change. The earth is becoming small and some changes are inevitable.

All human beings will have to live like a family.

Matin Yaqzan

Fredericton

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